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The Christian's Counsel.

A

SERMON

DELIVERED AT THE FUNERAL OF

Mrs. Judith Cogswell,

OF ATKINSON, N. H.,

OCTOBER 3, 1859.

BY

REV. JESSE PAGE, M. A.

PRINTED BY REQUEST OF THE FAMILY.

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PRESS OF C. C. P. MOODY.
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SERMON.

But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children.—LUKE xxiii: 28.

There were four classes of persons, who gathered around to see our Saviour die. There were the Roman soldiery, who were to be his executioners; there were the Jews, who had demanded his death, prepared to exult in his expiring agony; there were numerous spectators, who were looking on with wonder to see the mysterious developments of the scene; and there were those who, touched with sympathy, could not refrain from weeping, as they beheld the Saviour dragged to the place of execution. It was to this last class that our Saviour addressed the language of our text. He did not mean to prohibit all sympathy with the distressed, and sorrow for the departed; for those tears at the grave of Lazarus, and a life of sympathy with the afflicted, forbid such an inference. While on earth there was no heart more tender or benevolent than his; no hand oftener stretched out to relieve the suffering, and save those appointed to death; no eye that was more quickly moved at the sight of misery.

His tears over Jerusalem are an imperishable monument to his compassion and love; the finishing stroke of which was heard in that prayer, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." He forbade the widow of Nain to weep for her only son; and the ruler of the synagogue for his only daughter; but it was only when he was about to restore them to life. He had compassion upon them and removed their sorrows. We may well ask, why in this hour of his distress and agony does he turn away from him the sympathy of these daughters of Jerusalem?

I. In the first place, he did not need their tears. With a clear view of what was before him, in submission to the divine will, he had decided to drink the cup his Father gave him. It had been foretold by the prophet, that he would tread the wine-press alone; and of the people there should be none with him. No finite being could render any help. The sufferings, and the work before him, were such as none but God manifest in the flesh could endure and perform.

He had undertaken to make an atonement for sin, and work out redemption for a guilty race, and with him no man could help. This was a matter of joy, rather than sorrow to lost man. It was a great light to them that were sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death. It was to be a guide to their feet in the way of peace. It was to be to the believer, the resurrection and the life.

2. He did not need their tears, because he was near to glory. He had been despised and rejected of men;

a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and the Lord was about to lay on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He was going like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was about to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities; and the chastisement of our peace was to be upon him, and with his stripes, we were to be healed. Yet his soul was freely made an offering for sin. He knew he should see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. His sufferings he knew would be great—beyond the power of man or angel to tell—yet he knew they would be short. He knew the multitude would wag their heads, and the nails would pierce his hands, and the spear his side, but the severest agony would be the hiding of his Father's face; yet it would be but for a moment. There would be but a step from the cross to the crown; from Pilate's bar, to the throne of the universe; from the mockery of the wicked, to the worship of angels, and the adoration of saints. It was for the joy that was set before him, that he endured the cross, despising the shame.

His blood had mingled with the dust of Gethsemane, and it was soon to bedew the summit of Calvary; but it would be the last he would ever shed; and with it would pass away all sorrow. Gethsemane had witnessed the vigils of his last night, and Calvary would soon hear his last groan; but henceforth heaven would never cease to echo the song, "For thou wast slain and hast

redeemed to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests. He verified his own doctrine, The last shall be first. From the lowest place on earth, he ascended to the highest place in heaven. He that was last in esteem on earth, was henceforth to be first in esteem in glory; the lowest in ignominy, the highest in honors. He needed not their tears.

3. They did need them. They had need to weep for their sins, and the calamities they were about to bring upon them. Their probation was short. The day of retribution was near at hand. God was about to do his strange work, and bring to pass his strange act. He was about to lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet. They would be days of vengeance, that all things which are written might be fulfilled. Jerusalem was to be laid waste. The temple, the object of her pride, was to be demolished, not one stone lying upon another. The inhabitants, so often favored of heaven, were to be scourged and destroyed; more by internal factions, arising from perverse spirits, and hearts alienated from God, than outward foes. Perhaps the very mother, who did slay and eat her child secretly, in the straightness of the seige, wherewith the enemy distressed them, was one of those who wept at the treatment of Christ. She then needed tears more than Christ.

4. They had need to weep for their children who would suffer with them. That overflowing scourge, which should pass through and tread down the parents,

the children should not escape. They were among the first and severest to suffer. The parents were infatuated; it was natural that the children should be prejudiced. They did not believe the words of Christ. They did not flee with the elect. The things that belonged to their peace, were hidden from their eyes. For their enemies did cast a trench about them, and compass them round, and keep them in on every side, and lay them even with the ground, and their children within them; because they knew not the time of their visitation. They fell by the edge of the sword and by famine; they were led away captive unto all nations, and Jerusalem was trodden down of the gentiles. They had sold the Saviour for thirty pieces of silver; but thirty of them were bartered for a penny. They have been distressed and dispersed over all the earth unto this day. And although the Saviour saw this more fully than history has recorded it; for no doubt there were scenes, there were pangs of distress, which have not reached us; yet there was a wider scope to his vision. He looked forward to the day, for he spake of it, when he should come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. His prophetic eye saw far down into the depths of eternity, and he saw desolations and heard groans, of which the seige and sacking of Jerusalem were but faint emblems. For what is the demolishing of human labor, which must sooner or later fall, and the wasting of human flesh, which must shortly return to dust, compared with a heart alienated from God, unreconciled to his government, and abiding under his wrath and curse for-

ever? It was this future distress and desolation, of which that at Jerusalem was but a prelude, which mainly moved our Saviour's tears; because they would not open their eyes to see the things that belonged to their peace; even immediate repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. They surely had need to weep for themselves and their children, for their want of being renewed in the spirit of their minds.

II. True Christians, on the eve of their departure, can with great propriety adopt the language of our Saviour, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children."

1. In the first place they do not need our tears, for their work is done. They have had a life of toil and conflict, fully known only to themselves and to God. For we read that it is through much tribulation any shall enter the kingdom of heaven. They have had to labor to enter into that rest. Christian sympathy has been of inestimable value. The tear of affection has not been without gratitude; it has had its use in urging on the battle of life, and imparting comfort in sorrow. The power of sympathy over distressed and struggling hearts is very great. The burdens of life are much lightened by the mutual exchange of kind acts. It is here that there is that giveth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty. A cup of cold water given to a saint in Christ's name, shall not be unrewarded. And yet when life's work is done, they need it not. They are going to drink at the fountain,

2. In the second place, departed Christians need not our tears, for their sufferings are over. While in the flesh they were subject to infirmities and pains, to disappointments and anxieties. · They knew not what a day might bring forth. They were troubled as other men were not; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, that they may be partakers of his holiness. They wrestled hard with sins and doubts and fears. They had anxieties for the church, for friends, and for the world, which at times pressed heavily on their spirits by day, and disturbed the slumbers of night. And to the Christian mother, the future history of her family is a theme of the intensest interest. She has no confidence in any instrumentality to keep her children from the evil there is in the world, but the grace of God that bringeth salvation. And hence, until this grace of God is manifest in the soul, she has more or less of heaviness and sorrow in her heart. But at death this anxiety ceases. She is swallowed up in Christ.

> "Her languishing head is at rest,
> Its thinking and aching are o'er,
> Her quiet, immovable breast,
> Is heaved by affliction no more."

3. In the third place, departed Christians need not our tears, for they are rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love him. We see as yet through a glass darkly. We may, through grace, have some delightful foretastes of that rest that remains for the people of God; which may

awaken earnest aspirations for more light from above, and yet our conceptions of the joy that wells up in the heart of a ransomed spirit within the walls of that city, into which nothing unholy can enter, must be feeble. To stand on Mount Zion, and feel that the conflict is over, the doubts are past; the feet are no more to go out or stray; the tear is never more to moisten the eye, nor pain to pierce the heart, nor temptation to mar the love, or chill the devotion; that the song that falls so sweetly on the ear and charms the heart, is never to cease; where the Saviour manifests himself more fully than elsewhere; it must be joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And the crowning excellence of this state is, that it is to last forever. The joys of earth are transitory. The pleasures of to-day may give place to the pains of to-morrow. This thought mars our condition, and embitters our enjoyments. But no such thought enters heaven. For it is said, God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. Time will not waste, eternity will not diminish the inheritance of the saints in light. No thief can approach, no moth corrupt. No funeral chant will ever be heard in that temple not made with hands. No accents of sorrow will ever mingle with the anthems of angels, for there will be no more curse. But the throne of God and the Lamb shall be there, and his servants shall serve him. They shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads; and they shall reign forever and ever in that city, where there shall be no night, for

the Lord God will give them light. The Lamb is the light thereof. They surely need not our tears.

III. They who are left behind have reason to weep for sin. This is the occasion of all our sorrow. In the world, says our Saviour to his disciples, ye shall have tribulation; and of the fulfilment of this prophecy, no one doubts. He finds it in his own heart, in his own neighborhood, in every land he visits. Not a day passes without an illustration. And when he considers the wages of sin is death, and when he reads in the sufferings and death of Christ the cost of its expiation, the penalty of the law, and the awful displeasure of God, he feels there is just cause for tears, lest he fail of being a follower of those, who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. Although he believes the promise was unto him and his children, and to all that were afar off,—even as many as the Lord our God shall call,—yet sin may intercept that promise, and cut off the inheritance. There may be a failure through unbelief—through the deceitfulness of sin. This is a reason for tears to those who remain.

2. They have reason to weep, for they know not what trials may befal them. We know not what will be on the morrow. The scenes of earth are constantly changing. Friends suffering, disappointing, passing away. The supports of years are often swept away in a few hours, by unexpected and mysterious influences. The blossoms of piety are sometimes nipped by the frosts of error, and swept away in the whirlwind of temptation. To the benevolent heart this is a source of anguish. Temptations assail both the good and the bad

in this world, and he only is blessed who endures unto the end. We have reason to rejoice with trembling until the end comes. When we have fought a good fight, and finished our course, and kept the faith, then may we say to those who come after us, Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. Lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset you, and run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus.

3. Now, as in the days of our Saviour, we have need to be anxious for our children. The elements of society, both in a civil, literary, and religious aspect, are in commotion. When or how they will settle into repose, no man knows. Nations are ill at ease, looking abroad with a jealous eye. Many are running to and fro, and knowledge both good and bad is increasing. The last days are drawing near. The precursors are appearing. Discerning statesmen have their fears. Good men are anxious. Perilous times, spoken of by the Apostle, may be nearer than most suppose. For already do our daily journals assure us, without designing it, that men have become lovers of their own-selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God. Having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. And we may rest assured in time to come, as in time past, that the words of our Saviour will come to pass, "That wherever the carcass

is, there will the eagles be gathered together." That wheresoever the body politic becomes corrupt and morally dead, there will false teachers assemble to devour and destroy.

The condition of the world, for these long centuries, where the Saviour and the Apostles prayed and preached, is an illustration. This is no time surely to relax family discipline, nor to neglect the means of grace, nor to under-value early religious instruction and training. For we have a general fact illustrated before us to-day, that those parents who properly restrain and instruct their children when young, are more highly esteemed, and more kindly cared for when old. For God has said, "Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed." When men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth, it is no time to break covenant with God, nor neglect the ordinances of the gospel, nor restrain prayer, nor trample on the blood of God's Son, and do despite unto the Spirit of grace. Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the children of disobedience. When the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord alone can lift up a standard against him.

Such were somewhat the feelings of her who now sleeps before us in death. In looking for a suitable theme for this occasion, I could think of none more fitting than the one that fell from her lips, contained in our text. Speaking of her departure, she remarked that she could respond to the language of our Saviour when

he said, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." She for a long time felt that death was at the door, but for his entering she waited with singular patience and resignation. When he came, her last counsel being given, her last prayer being ended, without a struggle or a groan, she fell asleep in Jesus, and we trust has entered into his rest. A life of so little pretension, and yet of so much excellence and value, demands a more extended notice.

Judith Cogswell, widow of the late Doctor William Cogswell of Atkinson, N. H., was the daughter of the Hon. Joseph Badger of Gilmanton, N. H., and was born May 15, 1766; was married July 22, 1786, and died on the evening of Sept. 30, 1859, aged ninety-three years four months and fifteen days. Her worthy and honored husband died Jan. 1, 1831, leaving her a widow almost twenty-nine years. Her life was one of singular equanimity and devotion to a single object,—the doing of her duty in the sphere in which God placed her—and well has she fulfilled her mission. Her discerning and well-balanced mind enabled her to see things as they are, and not waste her strength, her happiness, and her usefulness, by resisting the manifest arrangements of Providence, and complaining of that which cannot be avoided. She passed a peculiarly quiet and happy old age,—happy for herself and those around her. We find the reason of this in the sanctifying power of grace on the natural elements of her character. She acted from principle rather than impulse, or rather principle was her impulse. What she had settled as right to be done, she did not hesitate to do; and what she thought

was wrong, she did not fear in some way to oppose. She was an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile. She spake as she thought although not always all she thought. She ever exhibited a commendable prudence. She was a peace-maker, and thus evinced her relationship to God. She was merciful, and therefore had reason to expect mercy. She forgave those who had offended her, and therefore had reason to hope for forgiveness. She had no ear for gossip, nor tongue for slander. She repelled it by a dignified silence, or on fitting occasions reproved it in a way that commended her to the consciences of those who heard.

Her views of religious truth were sound. She loved the cardinal doctrines of the Bible,—those that exalt God, and humble man. One of the hymns with which she was accustomed to soothe her spirits, when restless, to repose, was that which begins and ends with the words:

"Great God! how infinite art thou!
What worthless worms are we!
Let the whole race of creatures bow,
And pay their praise to thee."

She loved to repeat the 23d and 30th hymns of the second book of Watts, which bring to view God and Christ and saints in heaven, producing heavenly joy on earth. There are many hymns of a like character, some of which she committed to memory after she was fourscore years old, which she would rehearse with portions of Scripture, in the wakeful hours of night, till, sensible of the divine presence and protection, she fell asleep. And when nature was yielding to age and memory failed often to recognize her friends, it did not fail to retain her

prayers and her hymns, which you might still hear her repeating in the stillness of the midnight hour.

We may see here the secret of that symmetrical character, and peaceful life, of which we have spoken. She applied God's remedy for the ills of life; and it was efficacious. God's word was a light unto her feet and a lamp unto her path. The doctrines of the gospel embraced with the heart and the precepts of the gospel illustrated in the life form the most useful and happy character.

She loved the sanctuary and she loved its ordinances. She was always glad when they said unto her, let us go into the house of the Lord. While she could yet walk, she assembled with the people of God; and when she could no longer do so, her Bible and her hymn-book, show that she worshipped him in her private sanctuary. She had a heart to do, more than to say. Yonder bell, whose mournful tones accompanied our march to this place, was her gift. And there were other gifts of which she was not accustomed to speak. She loved this church, and she rejoiced in its prosperity, and she was saddened by any influence that seemed adverse.

As her years increased, Providence increased his gifts of worldly goods, for she seemed able to bear it. I doubt not if the Saviour had clearly required her to sell all she had and give to the poor, she would have done it. Her heart did not need the sacrifice and Christ did not demand it. On the reception of her yearly bounty, her first act was to send her annual subscription to her minister; and much of the rest was distributed in gifts. I know not that she added one ornament to her person

or one luxury to her life on account of it. If any should have asked for her jewels, like the noble mother of the Gracchi, she could point to her children and say, "these are my jewels."

We have said she fulfilled her mission; and this was her mission, and it was the highest mission she could have, to train her children for usefulness and for heaven. Her faith in the divine word, led her to believe the declaration of God, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." She co-operated with her excellent husband, in enforcing that healthy family discipline, which at the present day is too little regarded and too much neglected. If any have thought they were too particular and too rigid in their requirements, if they believe the divine word, that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," they have but to turn their eye on the fruit, for it remaineth, to be convinced of their mistake. It was a matter of joy to her, that her children were all prosperous in the world; but it was a matter of greater joy to her, that they were all the professed followers of her Saviour, and her grand children had all been dedicated to God in baptism. She spake of this with the warmest enthusiasm, with the hope that her descendants, baptized with the Holy Ghost, would follow in the path to glory. For her God had said, that he would shew mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments. If that individual, who sends out into the world a child thoroughly imbued with sound principles and correct habits, is one of our country's best benefactors, then the

church, then our country, owe her a debt of gratitude. Such articles are greatly needed, but most rare. Gold cannot buy them, diamonds cannot equal them, their price is far above rubies.

We say, then, that they who train a family for such a service, however quietly and obscurely, do a most excellent and acceptable work. They need not envy the king his crown, nor the warrior his laurels, nor the statesman his fame, for I greatly mistake, if in the prizes of eternity they do not excel. And such services ought to be had in remembrance here. The words of the wise man are appropriate to our subject. "The heart of her husband did safely trust in her, so that he had no need of spoil. She did him good and not evil all the days of his life. She rose while it was yet night and gave meat to her household and a portion to her maidens. She girded her loins with strength and strengthened her arms. She stretched out her hand to the poor, yea she reached forth her hands to the needy. She was not afraid of the snow for her household. Her husband was known in the gates when he sat among the elders of the land. Strength and honor were her clothing and she rejoiced in time to come. She opened her mouth with wisdom and in her tongue was the law of kindness. She looked well to the ways of her household and ate not the bread of idleness. Her children rose up and called her blessed, her husband also and he praised her. Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands and let her own works praise her in the gates."

The following Obituary Notice was inserted in the Manchester Mirror, Oct. 8, 1859, and was extensively copied into the periodicals of the day.

In Atkinson, N. H., Sept. 30, 1859, departed this life, in the 94th year of her age, Mrs. Judith Cogswell, widow of the late Dr. William Cogswell, who was a Hospital Surgeon in the army of the Revolution.

She was the youngest child of the elder Gen. Joseph Badger, being born in Gilmanton, N. H., May 15, 1766. Her father, in early life, resided in Haverhill, Ms., whence he moved his family to Gilmanton in July, 1763. He was one of the proprietors and one of the first settlers of that, subsequently, important town. He was a very prominent man in New-Hampshire, before, during the time of, and subsequent to, the Revolution. Many important offices were held by him and discharged to the general satisfaction of the community. His descendants, by the name of Badger, Cogswell, Upham and Clarke, have occupied almost every grade of office in New-Hampshire, and have exerted an extensive influence in their several spheres of action.

The subject of this sketch was married July 22, 1786. Her husband had retired from the service of his country, having closed the Hospital at West Point, which was under his charge, Sept. 1, 1785, and commenced the practice of his profession in Atkinson, in which he continued until the close of his useful life, Jan. 1, 1831. Mrs. Cogswell was the mother of nine children. The youngest died in early life. The eldest, the late Rev. Dr. William Cogswell, was known as the Secretary of the American Education Society for many years, died in 1850. The other seven are still living and are as follows: Mrs. Julia Coburn, whose first husband was Greenleaf Clarke, Esq., of Atkinson; Mrs. Hannah P. Badger, widow of the late Governor Badger of New-Hampshire; Joseph B. Cogswell, Esq., of Atkinson; Rev. Nathaniel Cogswell, of Yarmouth, Ms.; Hon. Thomas Cogswell, of Gilmanton; Francis Cogswell, Esq., of Andover, Ms.; and Hon. George Cogswell, of Bradford, Ms.

She had fifty grand children, forty-two great grand children, and one of the fifth generation.

She and her late sister, Ruth Cogswell, who was the widow of the Hon. Thomas Cogswell of Gilmanton, a Colonel in the Revolutionary Army, were, during the latter part of their lives, in the receipt of pensions from the Government, each to the amount of $600 annually.

The united ages of the subject of this memoir, and of her mother, amount to 188 years, or more than one tenth of the time elapsed since the Christian Era.

In all her relations in life she was contented and happy, gratified in seeing her children, and her children's children, settled in the world, respectable and respected. After a public profession of the Christian Religion for nearly half a century, she was "gathered unto her fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience, in the confidence of a certain faith, in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope, and in perfect charity with the world."

The funeral took place Oct. 3d, when an interesting and very appropriate discourse was delivered by her Minister, Rev. Jesse Page. Her obsequies were attended by a large circle of mourning relatives and sympathizing friends, who followed the remains to their final resting place in the ancient Church-yard in Atkinson.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord—for they rest from their labors."